(b) if so, the status thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE MINISTRY OF SCEINCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT: (a) Yes Sir.

(c) The Government have taken steps to strengthen the Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (I ASST), Guwahati by providing a major grant of Rs. 955 lakhs to upgrade their infrastructure including a building. The proposal for full funding by the Government of India is being reviewed in light of the infrastructural developments taking place at IASST.

Lowering the production cost of Steel

†4484. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRILAJPATRAI.

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the cost of production of steel in India is higher as compared to that of in other steel producing countries;

(b) if so, the countries where the cost of production of steel is lower than the cost of production of steel in India;

(c) whether there are possibilities of lowering the cost of production of steel in India; and

(d) if so, the steps to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Some of the major countries where the cost of production of finished steel (flat steel) is lower than the cost of production of steel in India are Brazil, China, the CIS countries, South Korea, Australia and U.K.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The following measures may lead to lowering the cost of production of steel in India:

Technological upgradation of steel plants.

Reducing cost of processing and improving productivity through intensive R&D efforts.

Optimal use of raw materials including labour.

Reducing energy consumption at all levels and thereby improving efficiency in overall operations.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Tackling infrastructure bottlenecks through larger investments in creation of physical infrastructure like upgradation/modernisation of roads, rail and ports.

Sports facilities in schools/colleges

4485. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a feet that sports facilities including swimming pools are not available for students in all the Government schools and colleges of the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) to (c) "Sports" is a State subject and it is primarily the responsibility of the State Government to create sports facilities including swimming pools at various places including government schools and colleges. However, in order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments in this direction, Central assistance is provided to the government schools, on receipt of viable proposals, for creation of various sports facilities under the scheme of "Grants for Creation of Sports Infrastructure".

2. Similarly, on receipt of viable proposals, Universities/Colleges—Government or private—are also assisted for development of sports facilities including swimming pool under the scheme of "Grants for Promotion of Sports in Universities and colleges".

Athletic tracks in Punjab

4486. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct sports/athletic tracks in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district wise; and

(c) the details of financial allocation made therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) to (c) No viable proposal seeking assistance for construction of cinder/grass athletic track in Punjab has been received during the last three years. However, construction of synthetic athletic tracks at Guru Nanak Stadium, Ludhiana and Netaji Subhash National Institute of Sports, Patiala have been completed during the last three years with admissible Central assistance of Rs. 1.00 crore each.